What is claimed is:

1. An R-T-B system rare earth permanent magnet, comprising a sintered body comprising:

a main phase consisting of an $R_2T_{14}B$ phase (wherein R represents one or more rare earth elements (providing that the rare earth elements include Y), and T represents one or more transition metal elements essentially containing Fe, or Fe and Co); and

a grain boundary phase containing a higher amount of R than said main phase,

wherein a product that is rich in Zr exists in said $R_2T_{14}B$ phase.

2. An R-T-B system rare earth permanent magnet according to claim 1, wherein said product has a platy or acicular form.

3. An R-T-B system rare earth permanent magnet according to claim 1, wherein the amount of oxygen contained in said sintered body is 2,000 ppm or less.

4. An R-T-B system rare earth permanent magnet according to claim 1, wherein said sintered body has a composition consisting essentially of 28% to 33% by weight of R, 0.5% to 1.5% by weight of B, 0.03% to 0.3% by weight of Al, 0.3% or less by weight (excluding 0) of Cu, 0.05% to 0.2% by weight of Zr, 4% or less by weight (excluding 0) of Co, and the balance substantially being Fe.

5. An R-T-B system rare earth permanent magnet according to claim 4, wherein

0.1% to 0.15% by weight of Zr is contained in said sintered body.